

Provided By  
**Carlsbad Police Department's  
Crime Prevention Unit**



# ***Home Security Guide***

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# Introduction

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First, the majority of residential crimes committed in Carlsbad are crimes of opportunity. Residents are leaving their homes and vehicles unsecured. By taking the time to secure your property, you eliminate the opportunity for most crime. Next, there are five (5) elements that when working properly together are scientifically proven to reduce your risk of residential crime. These elements are:

1. Surveillance – the ability for people see and be seen, by day and by night.
2. Lighting – inside and out, on timers or sensors when it starts to get dark
3. Physical Security - locks and hardware.
4. Traces of Activity- making it appear someone is home all the time.
5. Neighborhood Collaboration, also known as “Neighborhood Watch”.

**Identity** also plays a significant role in residential security. How are you identifying your home and property as unique? You want your house and property to be inviting and well cared for but you want it to be clear the moment someone steps on your land that they are on someone’s private property. This is not done through six foot solid walls and towering gates. This is accomplished through landscaping and pathways that guide visitors and deter unwanted guests.

This guide takes an *environmental approach* to securing your home incorporating these five (5) elements into three (3) environments. Use this guide in its entirety and not in parts. All three categories are equally important. The three (3) environments:

## 1. The Exterior

The exterior includes lighting, landscaping and house numbers. Through proper lighting and carefully managed landscaping, you can create an environment that is aesthetically pleasing but allows surveillance, defines space and guides guests onto and out of your property.

## 2. The Perimeter

The perimeter includes doors, windows, other entrances and alarm systems. How difficult would it be to get into your home, especially if there is good surveillance, lighting and security hardware? Optimally, you want to force an intruder to enter your property by breaking through a door or window. The majority of burglars enter through a window, door or garage you have left open.

## 3. The Interior

The interior includes all interior activities such as interior lighting, timers and traces of activity. Your goal inside is to make your home appear as though someone is home all the time. If an intruder is uncertain what is going on inside your house, he will probably move on to a different home.

These three (3) environments, exterior, perimeter and interior, combined with Neighborhood Watch work together to provide the ultimate security for your home.



# Lighting

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## Single Family Homes

Light up the perimeter of your house throughout the night. Light entrances, rear doors and dark areas around your house. If someone has to stand in a light to tamper with your property, they feel as if they can be seen, even if they cannot. The best place for outside lighting is under the eaves illuminating the wall of the house. Also light gates and driveways. The Crime Prevention Unit does not recommend motion sensor lights to light the perimeter of your house. Environmental elements such as animals cause these lights go on and off all night long scaring the occupant or desensitizing them to activity. A little light at night goes a long way.

## Multi-Family Homes

Along with the single-family home suggestions, light aisles, passageways and recesses within the building complex with a maintained minimum of at least *twenty-five one hundredths (.25) of a foot-candle* at the ground level after dark. Light open parking lots, carports and common areas such as laundry and mailboxes with a maintained minimum of *one (1) foot-candle* of light on the ground surface after dark. Protect these fixtures with weather and vandalism resistant covers. Take care landscaping does not deter from lighting, especially when overgrown

## Foot-candles

A foot-candle is a measurement of light. Light meters provide readings in foot-candles and you measure the level of light at the ground's surface.

## Timers and Sensors

Equip outdoor light fixtures with a timer or a photoelectric cell (sensor), which automatically turn the lights on at dusk and off at dawn. Or, convert your wall switch to an electronic timer.

## Light Sources

**Incandescent or halogen** lamps live short lives and are fairly expensive to operate. They put out a bright light; they are easy to control; and they are compact.

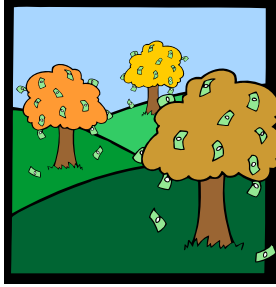
**Fluorescent lamps** are less expensive to operate than incandescent or halogen and have a longer life. They put out a good light but are more difficult to direct.

**Mercury vapor lamps** are less expensive to operate than Incandescent or Halogen and they have a long life. Their color is not as good as fluorescent but they are easier to direct and control.

**Metal halide lamps** require fewer fixtures to illuminate an area but have a shorter life. They provide an excellent light, are easy to direct and control and they are compact.

**High-pressure sodium vapor lamps** require few fixtures and have a low operating cost. Yet, the fixtures are expensive to purchase. They put out an excellent light, are easy to direct and control and they are compact.

**Low-pressure sodium lamps** have the lowest operating cost of all the lamps. The fixtures are expensive yet few are required. They are easy to direct and control but put out a yellow light reducing clarity. They are longer in size. Yellow lights are used to prevent loitering.



# Landscaping

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Landscaping creates an identity for your yard defining the space as your. It can also help direct visitors and deter unwanted guests.

## Fences and Landscaping

Prune tree limbs high enough to prevent passage over fences. Avoid thick bushes that might conceal a hole in the fence. Thick foliage also reduces vision into a yard. The police department recommends a fence you can see through instead of a solid fence. Remember the ability to see and be seen is an important element in your home's security. A transparent fence allows surveillance into your yard and does not provide a place for a criminal to hide.

## Gates

Padlock gates that provide access into your yard. Refer to the garage section for padlock specification. Just like fences, select gates that you can see through instead of gates that are solid. Illuminate gates into your yard so people using the gate can be seen.

## Roofs and Trees

Avoid trees that provide a ladder to rooftops and balconies. Prune tree limbs away from the house. Trimmed trees will also reduce clogged rain gutters and drains.

## Trees and Shrubs

Keep shrubs trimmed low in planters and use low-profile shrubs (below 2 feet) in parking areas. Allow shrubs to grow no higher than three (3) feet. Prune trees up from the ground creating a canopy no lower than five (5) to six (6) feet. This allows vision through trees and low profile plants. Design landscaping to not deter from lighting standards.

## Entranceways and Porches

Keep shrubs low or clear them out of entrances. Prune shrubs away from addresses. Increase visibility and reduce opportunity. Do not create a barrier with bushes and shrubs. Maintain vision into these areas and do not provide a place for someone to hide.

## Windows

Keep shrubs below window ledge level. Do not let an overgrown bush provide a place for a criminal to hide and tamper with a window. If it is a full-length window, use a low profile shrub. Check with a landscaping expert to make sure you use appropriate plants when landscaping. Security plants around windows can additionally deter activity.

## Security Plants

Security plants have prickly leaves or thorns. They limit access over fences and through windows. They also reduce concealing and loitering. Plant low level security plants on or around problem areas. Security landscaping used with appropriate fences provides excellent security, deterring intruders.



# House Numbers

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## Single Family Homes

Display your street number in a prominent location on the street side of your house. Place this number in a position that is easily visible to emergency vehicles to hasten their approach. The numbers should be no less than four (4) inches in height and should be a contrasting color to the house. Do not allow landscaping to cover house numbers. Ensure the numbers are maintained in good repair. The police department recommends illuminating the address during the hours of darkness.

## Multi-Family Homes

Position an illuminated diagrammatic chart of the complex at each emergency entrance of a multi-family complex. This chart shows the location of the buildings and units within the complex. In addition, display prominent identification numbers or letters, not less than four (4) inches in height on each building and individual unit within the complex. These numbers and letters should be easily visible to approaching vehicles and/or pedestrians.

- Ensure that landscaping does not deter from the visibility of the house or the unit numbers.



# Doors

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## Wooden Entrance Doors

All wooden entrance doors should be of a solid core construction with a minimum thickness of one and three-fourths (1-3/4) inches. This includes the pedestrian garage door and the interior garage door that provide access into your home.

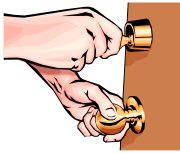
## Sliding Glass Doors

If your sliding glass door is not equipped with hardware that prevents the door from being rocked out of the track when it is in the locked position, equip sliding glass doors with a pin. The pin anchors the moving door to the stationary doorframe. Install the pin angled up to prevent it from being shaken out of place. *Caution, when drilling by glass there is a risk of breaking the glass.*

## French Doors

Equip French doors with a *single-cylinder* dead-bolt lock and metal flush bolts for the inactive leaf and a re-enforced strike plate (see description below). Use fully tempered glass or coat the glass with a burglary resistant glaze.

## Single Cylinder Dead-bolt Lock



Equip all single or double entrance doors with a *single-cylinder* dead-bolt lock. The bolt should have a minimum projection of one (1) inch and be constructed to repel a cutting tool attack. The deadbolt should embed at least three-fourths (3/4) of an inch into the strike plate. The cylinder should have a cylinder guard; a minimum five-pin tumbler and you should connect it to the inner portion of the

lock by connecting screws.

## Strike Plate

Screw in the dead bolt's strike-plate with a minimum of two screws. The throw of the dead bolt embeds into the metal strike plate located on the doorframe. These screws should be at least 2 inches in length and screw into the frame of the house and not just the soft wood frame of the door.

## Double Door Inactive Leaf

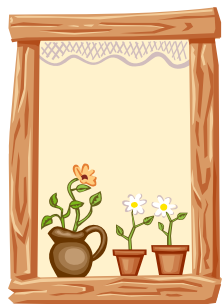
Provide the inactive leaf of double doors with metal flush bolts having a minimum embedment of five-eighths (5/8) of an inch into the header and footer of the doorframe.

## Viewer or Peep Hole

Furnish all front entrance doors with a wide -angle (190 degrees) viewer or peephole.

## Out Swinging Doors

Supply hinges for out-swinging doors with non-removable hinge pins or mechanical interlock to halt removal of the door from the outside.



# Windows

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Regularly check all window security hardware and frames. Ocean air corrodes the metal reducing its integrity. Note, new houses that settle often prevent window latches from functioning properly. ***A window can never be “secured” in the open position.***

Further, never place a window within forty-eight (48) inches of a doors locking device.

## Aluminum Sliding Windows

Check to see if your aluminum sliding windows were built with a metal piece in the track that prevents the window from being lifted from the track when in the locked position. If not, equip aluminum sliding windows with metal screws in the upper track. Adjust the screws to prevent the window from being lifted from the track. Also, equip the window with an anti-slide bolt or piece of dowel to prevent the window from being forced to slide. Use these two methods together to prevent the window from being forced opened. For optimal security, secure the window in the locked position, not partially open. Windows and doors left ajar for pets are not secure and create an opportunity for crime.

## Double-Hung Windows

If you have older double-hung windows it is possible for a burglary to jimmy open double-hung window latches. To secure this window, drill a downward sloping hole into the top of the bottom window through and in to the bottom of the top window and insert a pin or nail. Further, many older double-hung windows have settled in a way that prevents the latch from functioning.

## Louvered Windows

Louvered windows are a security risk. An intruder can slide louvers out of place for entrance through the window. For optimal security, remove and replace these windows with a solid glass or other type of ventilating window. Or, protect it with a grate or grill (except bedrooms).

## Crank Windows

If you have an older house with crank windows, make sure the frame has not decayed and that it is in good condition. Also, check the cranking device and latch to make sure they are functioning properly. You can replace the latching device with one that has a hole on the inside. Through this hole you can insert a pin to secure it in the closed position. The fire department does not recommend a lock be inserted through the whole because this would create a firetrap.





# Garages

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## Wood Doors

Wood doors should be solid or have panels a minimum of five-sixteenths (5/16) inch in thickness. Attach the locking hardware to the support framing.

## Aluminum Doors

Aluminum doors should be a minimum thickness of .0215 inches, riveted together a minimum of eighteen (18) inches on center along the outside seams. Attach a full-width horizontal beam to the main door structure, meeting the pilot or pedestrian access doorframe within three (3) inches of the strike area of the pilot, or pedestrian access.

## Fiberglass Doors

Fiberglass doors should have panels with a minimum density of five (5) ounces per square foot from the bottom of the door.

## Locks

Doors using a cylinder lock should have a minimum five (5) pin tumbler operation with the locking bar or bolt extending into the receiving guide a minimum of one (1) inch. Doors exceeding sixteen (16) feet in width should have two receiving points.

## Sliding Bolt

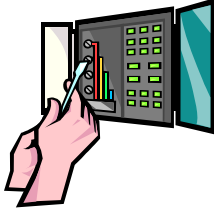
Doors with sliding bolt assemblies should have a minimum bolt diameter of three-eighths (3/8) inch, and protrude at least one and one-half (1-1/2) inches into the receiving guide. Attach the slide bolt to the door with non-removable bolts from the outside. Use rivets to attach the slide bolt assemblies. Install re-enforced slide bolts with padlock covers to prevent burglars from cutting the slide-bolt or padlock from garages.

## Padlocks

Padlocks used with an exterior mounted slide bolt should have a hardened steel shackle locking both at the heel and toe, and a minimum five (5) pin tumbler operation. Padlocks used with interior mounted slide bolts should have a hardened steel shackle with a minimum four (4)-pin tumbler operation.

## Gravity Drop Bolt

Old garage door openers do not secure your garage from burglary and can be forced. A gravity drop bolt used with a garage door opener helps to secure an older swinging garage door. Mount the bolt to the center of your garage door and it operates with your garage door opener by dropping a steel bolt into the ground when the garage door is closed. Use drop bolts on garages only when there is an auxiliary pedestrian door into the garage.



# Alarm Systems

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When considering your home's security, the building's *physical security is the most important element*. An alarm system does not provide security to a building that has been left unsecured. Further, you should want your alarm system to activate before someone enters your home and not after they have entered and are walking around. Concentrate on protecting your perimeter and you will also protect your interior.

## Get to know how your alarm system works

Is it hard wired? Is it wireless remote? What is your system's frequency and what else is operating on the same frequency? Does your system consist of magnetic contact points on windows and doors? If so, which windows and doors have contact points and which do not? Does your system include interior sensors such as motion or noise sensors? If so, has your alarm company explained common causes of false alarm activations, such as spiders or pets?

## Get to know all the features included in your burglar alarm system.

Has the alarm company carefully gone over all the features with you? Does your system have a hidden panic button or panic code? Did you know that no alarm activation, panic or otherwise, goes directly to the police department? Your alarm system uses your phone line to call your monitoring company. Next, the monitoring company calls the police department on a non-emergency phone line and waits for a communicator to assist them. *If you are truly in a panic situation, 9-1-1 is your lifesaver.* Have you spoken with your alarm sales person about the maintenance of your system? Did you know a spider building a nest in a motion sensor could cause your system to falsely activate? Did you know your system is required to have a battery backup? What happens if you are out of town and your system malfunctions? You need to have a plan with your monitoring company.

## Read these alarming burglar alarm system facts

Did you know the City of Carlsbad has an *Alarm Systems Ordinance* that holds you responsible for the activities of your alarm system and your contracted agents? Why does Carlsbad need an ordinance?

- Ninety-nine (99) percent of all burglar alarm system activations are false. The most common cause of a false activation is *user error*. Do you know what to do if you accidentally set-off your system?
- Carlsbad Police Department responds to more than *300 false activations* per month.
- More than *90 hours per month* of police officer time is used responding to false alarm activations. Why? Alarm users neglect to follow false alarm cancel procedures.
- What does the ordinance consider a false alarm? "False alarm" means the activation of an alarm system through mechanical failure or malfunction, or accidental tripping, miss-operation or misuse by the lessee or owner of the alarm system or his employee or agent, including mechanical failure or malfunction caused by negligent maintenance of the system (Chapter 8.50.10h).



# The Interior

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## Lighting

Light your house so you never have to come home to darkness. Put interior lights on timers. A family room light should come on when it starts to get dark and go off when you normally go to bed. Next, a bedroom light could come on and go off throughout the evening simulating activity in the house. Do not set interior light timers to remain on all night long. Interior lights should act as if someone is home and should go off at a normal hour. Interior lights left on all night counteract outdoor lighting.

## Timers

Use timers on a variety of household items to simulate activity in your home. Radios, for example, simulate noise.

## Operation Identification

Operation Identification (ID) is a citizen's burglary prevention/property identification program. It involves marking articles in your home with your California driver's license number. Burglars do not want items that police can identify with their owners. Engrave items such as televisions, computers and stereos. You can check out an engraver from the Carlsbad City Library. Take a picture of the property that you cannot engrave, such as jewelry, crystal and antiques. Further, take a video of your home, narrating in for insurance purposes.

## Serial Numbers

It is important to keep a list of all the serial numbers in your home. Keep this list and all of your other important numbers in your safe deposit box. It is also a good idea to go through your entire home and list the contents. This is very helpful in an emergency such as fire or earthquake.

## 9-1-1 Stickers

Affix 9-1-1 stickers to all the phones in your home. Additionally, this sticker provides the non-emergency police phone number for easy access. Take the time to call the police to report suspicious activity. Obtain this sticker from the Carlsbad Police Department.

## Displays

Do not display expensive items such as televisions and computer systems in clear view of a window. This is equally important for purses and wallets. You do not want to create an opportunity for someone who is walking by your house. Christmas trees, surrounded by presents, in front of a window, are tempting to an opportunistic criminal.





# Neighborhood Watch

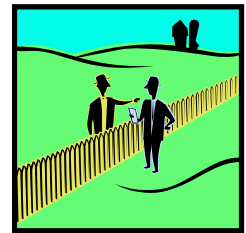
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Neighborhood cooperation and collaboration is the final and fifth (5<sup>th</sup>) element to ridding your neighborhood of criminal activity. Like the other elements, neighborhood collaboration has been scientifically proven to help make your neighborhood less attractive to opportunistic criminals. Why? Neighbors that work together and care about each know what normal activities take place in their neighborhood. Thus, they know when something happens that is not normal or is suspicious and they take action because they know what to do about it.

## What is Neighborhood Watch?

Neighborhood Watch is a police department coordinated, **community action and problem-solving program**. The program uses the idea of a team spirit and good neighborly behavior to address issues that concern your neighborhood. Fortunately you can find good neighbors everywhere.

Neighborhood Watch is *not a guard duty*. Simply, you and your neighborhoods gain community spirit and control by forming neighborhood alliances and by learning to work together as a team.



## How does the Police Department help?



The police department will facilitate group communication and resource development. Your team will learn about city resources and where to find help to resolve your concerns.

Finally, the police department will guide your group through a discussion and the creation of a plan to resolve **any** neighborhood issue that is concerning you. As a participant you will . . .

- Get to know your neighbors and learn to build a community team spirit
- Develop strategies for a communication network
- Learn what is normal in your neighborhood and what to do about suspicious activity
- Bring your issues to a neighborhood forum
- Develop a plan of action to resolve those issues
- Learn how to define and work with community resources
- Learn about crime statistics and crime prevention strategies

**Start your Neighborhood Watch Program today and watch your community spirit grow!**  
**Call (760) 931-2105**

## **Carlsbad Police Department**

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